

# Plant Fact Sheet

## COMMON PERIWINKLE

*Vinca minor* L.

Plant Symbol = VIMI2

Contributed by: USDA NRCS Plant Materials Program



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### Uses

**Erosion control:** Its use should normally be restricted to partially shaded areas and north or east exposures on ramps and inclines. It should be considered on roadsides in specially adapted locations and sites.

**Ornamental and beautification:** Common periwinkle is particularly desirable as an attractive evergreen ground cover in mild climates. It is valuable on yards, banks, or odd areas as a low maintenance ground cover. It tolerates light traffic but should not be used where frequent trampling occurs.

### Status

Please consult the PLANTS Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant's current status (e.g. threatened or endangered species, state noxious status, and wetland indicator values).

### Description

*Vinca minor* L., common periwinkle, is a perennial evergreen ground cover that is winter hardy. It is closely related to the big leaf periwinkle (*V. major* L.), except in size and hardiness. Common

periwinkle seldom exceeds a height of 6 inches although runners may trail long distances on the ground. The runners root at the node under moist conditions. The thick glossy leaves form a good ground cover. Small blue flowers occur indeterminately from April to September.

### Adaptation and Distribution

Common periwinkle is adapted to mild climates. It usually requires part shade and ample moisture, but will tolerate full sun if it is adequately watered. It is more hardy than big leaf periwinkle. Moisture and exposure are often more restrictive than soil type on determining adaptation. Common periwinkle is adapted to a wide range of soils. It is found on well drained to poorly drained soils that can be calcareous, alkaline to slightly acidic, and medium textured to fine textured. The plant should be used where there is adequate moisture.

Common periwinkle is distributed throughout the East. For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Website.

### Establishment

Plants may be established from rooted cuttings produced in flats or from plant division. Plant on a spacing of 18 inches x 18 inches. Fertilizer should be applied for vigorous establishment. Mulch critical areas immediately after planting. Planting can be done any time of the year when moisture is adequate for establishment. This should ordinarily be planted on areas that can be sprinkled or otherwise irrigated or on sites where average annual precipitation is over 20 inches.

### Management

Little or no maintenance is required after establishment. Well-established plantings may be clipped to promote new growth. Chemical or mechanical weeding may be needed to control unwanted vegetation.

### Pests and Potential Problems

Common periwinkle can be affected by blight, canker, leaf spot, and root rot.

### Control

Please contact your local agricultural extension specialist or county weed specialist to learn what

works best in your area and how to use it safely. Always read label and safety instructions for each control method. Trade names and control measures appear in this document only to provide specific information. USDA, NRCS does not guarantee or warranty the products and control methods named, and other products may be equally effective.

**Cultivars, Improved, and Selected Materials (and area of origin)**

‘Alba’, ‘Atropurpurea’, ‘Bowles’, ‘Variegata’, ‘Multiplex.’ Seedlings are available at most commercial nurseries.

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>

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